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DEPARTMENT OF AGING
Choice, Independence and Dignity for Older Marylanders

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Maryland Braces Itself for Hurricane Sandy

Seniors are Urged to Take Precautions to Mitigate Damage

BALTIMORE, MD (October 26, 2012) – Marylanders are being urged to prepare now for the impact of Hurricane Sandy, which is expected to hit the state over the weekend. Weather forecasters predict the storm will affect this area as early as Sunday, moving slowly across the region and bringing nearly 48 hours of heavy rain and strong winds. Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) officials cautioned residents to watch for stream and tidal flooding, trees falling due to the combination of wind and wet ground, and power outages caused by winds and falling trees. Secretary of Aging Gloria Lawlah urged Marylanders to check on any older or disabled friends, neighbors or family members to make sure they have access to adequate supplies during this potentially difficult time.

“Older Marylanders are particularly vulnerable during natural disasters and storms like Hurricane Sandy,” said Lawlah. “If you know of a loved one or neighbor who lives alone or has any medical conditions, check on them and make sure they have adequate food, shelter, and medication.”

Among the safety tips listed on the MEMA website are the following:

- Prepare for possible power outages lasting several hours or even several days.
- Realize that the daytime temperatures are expected to be about 20 degrees cooler after the storm. If the power goes out, make sure you have extra blankets and appropriate clothing to deal with cooler temperatures if you power is out.
- If using a generator, make sure it is not in a basement or garage and make sure it is located a safe distance from any door, windows or ventilation systems.
- Make sure cell phones and other electronic devices are fully charged. Consider purchasing a car charger if you don't already have one.
- Secure any loose items such as yard furniture and grills outside of your house.
- Make sure you have a disaster supply kit with water, non-perishable food, a change of clothes, extra medications and any special items you might need for infants, children and pets.

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- Have a battery-operated or crank powered radio available to follow news and weather reports if the power goes out.
- Stores may be crowded on Sunday; consider stocking up on essentials a day or two sooner.
- If you lose power, practice safe food handling. Several web sites can provide appropriate information.
- If you are driving in or just after heavy rains and you see standing water, do NOT drive through it. TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.

Visit the Department of Aging's website at www.aging.maryland.gov for updated information. Also check its Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/MarylandDepartmentofAging.

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